

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

April 15, 2020

The Honorable Ryan McCarthy
Secretary
US Department of the Army
101 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310-0101

Dear Secretary McCarthy:

I write to respectfully request the Department of the Army review the actions of Major Gerard M. Devlin on October 13th and 14th, 1965, for which he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and, if warranted, posthumously award him the Medal of Honor. From the evidence I have been provided and am including with this letter, I firmly believe that then-Captain Devlin distinguished himself with conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity, at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty, with his actions during this period. This is also consistent with his chain of command's recommendation that he be awarded the Medal of Honor.

While serving as a Senior American Advisor, attached to the 44th Ranger Battalion in the Army of the Republic of Vietnam, Major Devlin was renowned for his expert advice and for his willingness to fight alongside his men. Revered by American and Vietnamese soldiers alike, Major Devlin was a distinct asset to the United States, and to those who served alongside him, during the conflict.

And on October 13th, during the infamous battle of "Blood River" at Thoi Lai, while bearing wounds from a mortar blast, Major Devlin ignored the prospect of his own life to take charge of the battalion following the death of the acting commander, saving countless lives in the process. In the face of automatic weapons fire and grenade barrages, Major Devlin dove into a canal to save a drowning 1st Lieutenant Robert Walsh. And, despite his life-threatening injuries, Major Devlin went on to rally his men and successfully directed a defense that ultimately repelled the enemy's attack.

Major Devlin's extraordinary heroism on that day reflects the highest traditions and tenets of the United States Army. Though Major Devlin has passed on, he will always be remembered for his devotion to his country and steadfast resolve in the face of insurmountable odds. Accordingly, I believe Major Devlin is worthy of the highest valor award that our nation bestows and respectfully request you ensure that his service to our nation is properly recognized. I appreciate your prompt attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Joe Cunningham
Member of Congress